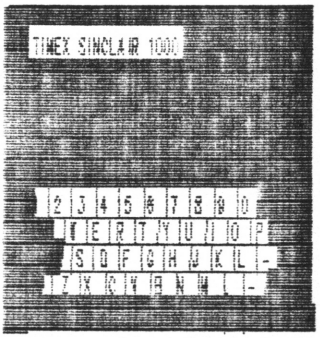
MAY 1991 NEWSLETTER

NEXT MEETING: MAY 15, 1991

CAPITAL DISTRICT TIMEX/SINCLAIR COMPUTER CLUB

ALBANY, NEW YORK



OUR CLUB MEETINGS ARE HELD AT THE CAPITAL DISTRICT PSYCHIATRIC CENTER, 75 NEW SCOTLAND AVENUE, ALBANY, NEW YORK IN ROOM 37. OUR MEETINGS ARE NOW HELD FOUR TIMES A YEAR, FEBRUARY, MAY, AUGUST AND NOVEMBER ON THE THIRD WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH AT 7:30 - 10 PM.

FOR INFORMATION, COMMENTS OR CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE NEWSLETTER PLEASE CONTACT CLUB PRESIDENT FRED LEWIS, 5 SHERWOOD PARK DR., BURNT HILLS, NY 12027, TELEPHONE (518) 399 5038

As you can see from the changes in LOGO, format etc. our club has had a few changes. With declining membership (are the rats deserting the sinking ship and all buying big computers?) we decided at the February meeting to switch to four meetings a year to lighten the meeting prep load. Jack Barone has served nobly and turned out quite a few fine newsletters. He is taking a richly deserved time out and I (Fred) will crank out the Newsletters for now. Please feel free to send in any stuff that might be included in the Newsletter.

See page 2 for upcoming program notes. Meet two little characters that show up from time to time to make a point: Eggy (which stands for Egbert and also egghead) who is a smart worry-wart and his friend, Mack, his straight man.

Fractals and chaos have stirred up a lot of interest and attempts to use and explain the new technology. Complexity has caused problems.

WHAT WE CAN KNOW

OF COURSE THERE'S LOTS
OF INVISIBLE THINGS OUT THERE
BUT WE DON'T KNOW HOW MANY BECAUSE
WE CAN'T SEE THEM
IT LOOKS LIKE
WE AREN'T MUCH SMARTER THAN
THE STONE AGE GUYS

Fractal geometry has sparked tremendous interest and the number of research papers in just two abstract journals, CHEMICAL ABSTRACTS, and PHYSICS BRIEFS increased from only a few in 1978 to nearly 1000 papers abstracted in 1988. CHEMICAL & ENGINEERING NEWS, April 22, 1991 published a special report review of fractals as a new tool for study of complex chemical systems. However, misunderstanding of concept of fractional dimensions and the complexities of applying fractal technology to physical systems has caused errors in claims and interpretations.

In attempting to fathom the mysteries of the Universe and understand how things work we have to realize that there may be, and probably are, phenomena that: we may not be able even to see; some of which may never become known at all; and some phenomena we can see (or see evidence of) may be framed in such unfamiliar parameters that we will never really understand them even if there is evidence they exist. Examples include FIELDS (electric, magnetic and gravitational) which we know by their effects but which we cannot see or smell; and INERTIA, the cause of which is in doubt and has caused much debate (Newton screwed up on that one); and QUANTUM MECHANICS which predict (and deliver) impossible happenings, and even Einstein doubted.

Next meeting will be devoted to continuing some past reviews of the applications (and misapplication) of fractal technology to some practical uses, especially catalysis and chemical applications and to the problems of interpreting (but unexpected benefits of) fractional dimensions with practical applications for example in heterogeneous catalysis.